

"Serving Those Who Served"

Call 1-800-562-2308 for Statewide Assistance

www.wa.gov/dva

Vol. 1 Issue 5

September, 2000

Superintendents named for Veterans Home and Soldiers Home and Colony

Jerry Towne has been named superintendent of the Washington Soldiers Home and Colony in Orting and Robert Jones named superintendent of the Washington Veterans Home in Retsil effective July 1, 2000.

John M. King, director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), announced the appointment following confirmation by Governor Gary Locke.

"One of the challenges in filling positions at this level," said King "is finding well-qualified individuals who possess the critical knowledge, skills, abilities and experience needed to be successful. Jerry Towne and Robert Jones are both of this caliber."

Towne, a Vietnam veteran, had been the acting superintendent at the Soldiers Home since December 1999 and an employee of WDVA for 15 years. As Region I Program Manager, he earned the Governor's Quality Award in 1999 while working with the incarcerated veterans in King County. His model program reduced the recidivism rate by 21 percent, saved the county over one-half million dollars and received national recognition.

"I am confident this distinguished veteran will enhance our ability to meet the challenges of the future, while protecting the dignity of our residents," King said.

Jones, a retiree of the US Navy, has been serving as the associate superintendent at the Washington Veterans Home for the past three years. He spent many of his 40 years of military service in the health care field and later gained experience in long term care, both in the public and private sector.

"I'm very happy about my appointment as superintendent and look forward to the more challenging tasks and the continuance of providing the highest quality of care possible for our veterans," said Jones.

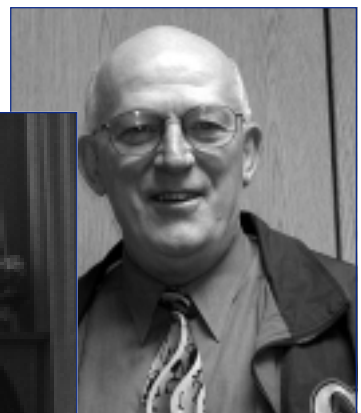
Jones received his Masters in Business from National University in San Diego and his Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration from George Washington University in Washington D.C.

"Our residents deserve the highest quality of care, and I am confident these distinguished veterans will provide the leadership to meet the challenges of the future," King added.



Jerry Towne

(right) Jerry Towne attended the recent Korean War Veterans ceremony at Fort Lewis with several residents from the Soldiers Home.



Robert Jones

(left) Bob Jones presents Elizabeth Jennings with a certificate of appreciation for her participation in the resident's Therapeutic Incentive Program.

What's Inside...

New Superintendents Named	page 1
Director's Comments	page 2
Managers Honored	page 2
Communication	page 3
Korean Memorial Wreathlaying Ceremony	page 4
Legislative Update	page 5
Homes Highlights	page 6
Daughters of WWII Veterans	page 8
Miss America attends Puyallup Fair	page 9
Publications Survey	page 12

Veteran Voices

Volume 1, Issue 5
September, 2000

Governor
Gary Locke

WDVA Director
John M. King

Communications Director
Jim Guthrie

Publications Editor
Miriam Young

Staff Writer
Colleen Gilbert, Media & Community Relations

Veteran Voices is published for Washington State veterans and their family members, WDVA employees and Home residents.

Call 1-877-VETS-R-US (877-838-7787) for an application to either veterans home.

Please submit comments, articles and address changes to:
Miriam Young
PO Box 41150
Olympia, WA 98504-1150
miriam@dva.wa.gov
(360) 725-2169.

When credit is given to the source, articles from *Veteran Voices* may be reprinted.

To obtain this publication in an alternative format call (360) 725-2169.



John King, WDVA Director

READY, SET ... GO

Two new superintendents at the Homes; a new communications director; finalization of a master plan to create a state-of-the-art skilled nursing facility; implementation of an agency-wide strategic plan.

It's a full plate with a lot of moving pieces ... and I can't think of a more exciting time for our agency, or our state's veteran population.

On July 1, Bob Jones was appointed the new superintendent at Retsil, and Jerry Towne the new superintendent at Orting. Both men are committed to making the Homes great places to live – and great places to work. Their enthusiasm and commitment to both residents and staff is unmatched and I am honored they accepted the appointments.

Jim Guthrie is the agency's new communications director. He is a U.S.A.F. veteran and brings eight years of legislative experience from the House of Representatives. Our agency has a great story to tell and it'll be his job to do it.

We are laying the groundwork of our agency master plan. With expanding the continuum of care our main objective, we have focused on building a new skilled nursing facility and providing long-term care in Eastern Washington. The final pieces of this master plan are being put into place – ready for your review and input in October – and in time for start of the legislative session in January. I believe this is a solid proposal with the best interests of our veteran population in mind. I think you'll agree.

After over a year of meetings, committees, drafts, reviews and adjustments, it is time for each and every agency employee to become involved with implementing the strategic plan.

The goals of the plan are very simple:

- Improve the quality of care and services for veterans and their families;
- Maximize our resources to honor the nation's debt to veterans;
- Review our core processes to anticipate and influence our future needs; and
- Continue to invest in staff and provide the tools that result in high-quality services.

This strategic plan sets the long-range vision for the agency, how we can improve our work (and workplace) and what we can do to better serve those who served.

We have a rich history in this agency and others have recognized the hard work we do. Management and staff should be congratulated for achieving full capacity at the Homes, which not only resulted in additional funding for WDVA, but the entire state budget. Additionally, the diligent work of management and staff to provide future benefits to veterans during this time of restructuring should not go unnoticed. Finally, your hard work not only headed off a budget reduction, but actually increased revenue and solved a statewide resource issue.

It is a busy time for this agency, but an exciting time, too. I look at our past and realize our future looks even brighter. It will take our best efforts during this time and I can't wait for us to get started.

**WDVA'S PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNOR
FISCAL YEAR 2001**

PROGRAM/AGENCY/FINANCIAL

Maximize federal, local and private funding sources to reduce reliance on the general-fund state budget. Last year, WDVA reduced skilled nursing cost of care by 27 percent and increased federal and local revenues by \$3 million. This year, WDVA will exceed the bed fill goal of 93 percent by at least 2 percent.

LEARNING AND GROWTH

Implement an agency-wide Human and Resource Development plan to include at least 30 percent of line staff and 30 percent of supervisors. An internal tracking system will be in place by Nov. 30, 2000.

CUSTOMER AND CONSTITUENT

Take services directly to veterans. The field service restructuring — including the newly developed Veteran Information, Benefits and Assistance Fairs — will complete an additional 150 successful veterans benefits claims each quarter, for a total of 600 this fiscal year.

Develop and implement a client tracking program this fiscal year.

FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL

Establish an additional 50 community beds to serve homeless/or domiciliary veterans, bringing the biennium total to 102. This would represent 104 percent of goal.

The Urban Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project targets placement of over 189 veterans in full time employment by December 31, 2000. Additionally, the program will assist 180 homeless veterans with transitional or permanent housing.

INTERNAL PROCESSES

Continue to be the national model for service to incarcerated veterans in the King County jail system and maintain a recidivism rate of 15 percent.

INTERNAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PROCESS

Monitor the implementation of each initiative in the agency's strategic plan. Project leaders will report regularly to the Management Team, as well as quarterly meetings of the Extended Management Team. Two of the extended management meetings will be held at the Homes and be open to all staff.

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNICATION

By Jim Guthrie, Communications Director
jimgu@dva.wa.gov

Com.mu.ni.ca.tion *n.*
The exchange of thoughts, messages or information.

It's hard to believe I've been with the agency for two months already, but you've heard the saying about how time flies. So far, it has been fun. Challenging, but fun. The people I've met – and multiple visits to the Homes – have shown me the dedication and commitment WDVA management and staff has toward our state's veteran population.

Communication *n.*
announcement,
broadcast, bulletin,
expression,
information,
presentation,
speaking,
statement.....

As the new communications director, I recognize the various audiences the agency serves require many different forms of communication. Field Services, the Homes and Central Office each have a multitude of responsibilities and daily requirements. The agency has a responsibility to keep customers (veterans) and their families informed. As a state agency, which also receives federal money, other state and federal officials need to be kept "in the loop." There are also opportunities to take the veterans' message to the media.

Effective communication is a challenge. Having reviewed the WDVA employee survey of 1998, it is very clear the agency can do a better job of communicating, both internally and to the veteran population. One can sit in an office and send an e-mail, place a phone call, fax information, or even publish a newsletter and believe he or she has communicated. Maybe so, but did that information get through? Was it understood?

I understand communication will never be perfect, but it can be improved, it can be simple and it needs to go both ways. Please take the time to fill out the survey on the last page. What do you think of the changes already made in the Veteran Voices? What other changes would you like to see? How can this agency better communicate? Let me know. Share your thoughts. Spread the word. Communicate.



Jim Guthrie
Communications Director

WDVA Managers honored

During Washington Management Service day at Ft. Lewis, Director John King presented the Director's Award to four of the agency's outstanding managers.

Jim Rising's professional focus as key planner of the field services reinvention is a large reason this pilot program is well on its way to being a



Jim Rising

model for other states to follow. As the agency's Grants and Contracts Manager, he is the successful coordinator of the \$249,000 grant for the Homeless Veteran



Bob Jones

Reintegration Project, and his efforts have also resulted in the agency exceeding its goal in acquiring beds for homeless veterans.

Bob Jones, Superintendent of the Washington Veterans Home at Retsil, received the Director's award for his continual research and development of cost saving projects and partnerships with outside resources. Jones exemplifies a team player – no task beneath him, and was the impetus for the new pharmacy contract which has reduced medication costs. He is currently a key participant on the Staffing Model Committee.

Karolyn Wayt, WDVA's Financial Manager, was nominated for the director's award by several people, having demonstrated exemplary leadership and teambuilding skills. Her exceptional knowledge of budgeting and accounting have

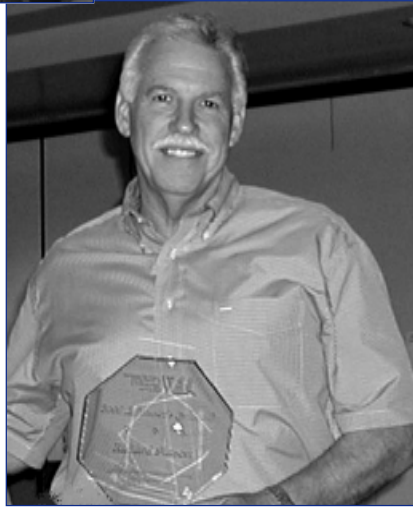
resulted in additional resources and savings for the agency. She has brought the agency improved credibility with other state agencies and legislators, and continually expresses a positive and cheerful attitude, regardless of the workload.



Karolyn Wayt

Richard Stewart, Region Manager for Veteran Services, is making significant contributions to the continuing reinvention of field services and the coordination of the Health Screening and Benefits Fairs. His enthusiasm and expertise are helping to make this new direction for vet services such a success. His willingness to take on the responsibility to become team leader of the Food Service Team at Retsil resulted in over 25 recommendations to improve quality and service delivery. Stewart has also participated in developing or implementing several successful projects:

- Training Development Team
- Enlightened Leadership
- Quality Improvement Program
- Pre-separation Process



Richard Stewart

Hundreds pay their respects with flowers

By Colleen Gilbert, staff writer

A special wreath-laying ceremony was held on July 29 at the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Olympia. Keynote speaker, Governor Gary Locke, was joined by Consul General Byung-rok Moon, Consulate of the Republic of Korea, Major General Nam-Pyo Park, Republic of Korean Army, retired, and Lt. Governor Brad Owen as they laid the official wreath from the state of Washington at the memorial. Many veterans organizations were then joined by several hundred adults, young people and children as they paid their respects by laying wreaths and flowers while the Gospel Outreach Choir of Olympia sang, “You’ll Never Walk Alone.”



A special recognition of the 22 countries that fought as Allies under the United Nations Command was a part of the opening ceremonies, along with presentation of the colors by the Washington National Guard. The overflow crowd was entertained by the beautiful voices of the Joong-Ang Presbyterian choir of Tacoma as their traditional Korean costumes provided a backdrop of spectacular color throughout the event. Another highlight of the occasion was provided by Lani Pineda and Sam Young Oh, two high school students who read “I Am Not Forgotten,” a touching poem written by Lieutenant Colonel Richard Kirk, (ret) and first read at the dedication of this memorial in 1993. Lani began by reading the poem in English and Sam followed by reading it in Korean. The ceremony ended with the Gospel Outreach Choir singing “Taps” followed by Bugler Christopher Oglesby, a staff sergeant

with the Washington National Guard, sounding “Taps”. “This annual celebration provides an opportunity for the citizens of Washington to pay tribute to the 532 Washington residents who gave their lives for our freedom in the Korean conflict,” said John M. King, director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. “We simply cannot forget what they, and thousands of other veterans, have done for us.” This year marks the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War and commemorative ceremonies will be held nationwide for the next three years, under the leadership of the Department of Defense. For additional information concerning the Washington State Korean War Veterans Memorial, visit the memorial web site at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/legis/vetmemrl/>.

Veterans Day Activities

Tahoma National Cemetery
November 10 - Veterans Day Program - 11 a.m.
* POC: (425) 413-9614

City of Auburn Events - November 11, 2000

9 a.m. Wreathlaying Ceremony - Mountain View Cemetery
10 a.m. Evergreen Brass Quintet - Auburn City Hall
11 a.m. Auburn Veterans Day Parade - Main Street
1:15 p.m. Remembrance Ceremony - Veterans Memorial Park
2 p.m. Marching Band 2000 Parade and Field Competition
Auburn Memorial Stadium

9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Static Display - Division Street between Main and 1st St. SE
9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Willie and Joe Living History Encampment
Veterans Memorial Park
* POC: Auburn Parks and Recreation (253) 931-3043.

Olympia Veterans Day Parade
November 11, 9 a.m. Capital Blvd. (360) 943-7366. See related story on page 10.

Washington Veterans Home Ceremony
November 11 - 10 a.m. Auditorium
Retsil, WA (360) 895-4700

Washington Soldiers Home and Colony Ceremony
November 11 - 2 p.m. Chilson Hall
Orting, WA (360) 893-4511

Spokane Arena (Veterans Memorial Arena)
November 11 - 10:30 a.m. Ceremony includes dedication of Memorabilia Showcase
* VA personnel on hand at Information & Assistance Booth
* POC: (509) 434-7500



Glenda Vick, Constituent & Legislative Manager

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

As we are in the midst of the campaign season, WDVA employees need to be aware that representatives of various causes and campaigns may be contacting you for information, requesting your assistance with a campaign or suggesting your attendance at a meeting.

Please remember while you are free to undertake political activity on personal time, no state resources – including your work time – can be used to support or detract from any campaign.

If someone requests information, you may provide neutral information in response to a direct request. Keep in mind, you must treat everyone equally regardless of his or her political point of view. Also, supervisory employees shall not require other employees to engage in campaign-related activities on personal time.

For more information please review WDVA Policy #680.600 (Code of Ethics), WDVA Policy #680-400 (Use of State Resources), RCW 42.52.180 (Use of Public Resources for Political Campaigns), and RCW 42.17.130 (Forbids use of Public Office or Agency Facilities in Campaigns).

VETERANS BENEFITS

- HR 4864 - Veterans Claims Assistance Act of 2000**
 - Requires the VA to make “reasonable efforts” to obtain records that would help a veteran establish entitlement to a benefit.
- HR 4850 - Veterans Benefits Act of 2000**
 - A stroke or heart attack incurred while performing inactive duty training is included as a service-connected injury under veterans’ disability compensation provisions.
 - Defines the loss of one or both breasts due to a radical or modified radical mastectomy as a service-connected disability.
 - Authorizes cost-of-living increases on disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities.
 - Authorizes participation in the Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance program for individuals who volunteer for assignment to a mobilization category in the Individual Ready Reserve.
- HR 4488 - Women Vietnam Veterans’ Children’s Birth Defects Act**
 - Provides compensation, health care and rehabilitative serves to disabled individuals born with a variety of birth defects similar to that currently provided for the children of Vietnam veterans who suffer from spina bifida.
 - Ensures VA has the authority to provide health care and appropriate compensation.
 - Consistent with congressional legislative action taken in the past and would benefit those disabled individuals born with a variety of birth defects who were conceived after their mother’s service in the Republic of Vietnam.
- HR 362** - To extend commissary and exchange privileges to veterans with a service-connected disability rated 30 percent or more and their dependents. (Pending)

LONG-TERM HEALTH CARE

- HR 4040 - Long-Term Care Security Act**
 - Would require the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to develop and administer a long-term care insurance program for federal employees, members of the uniformed services, retirees from federal or military service, and specified relatives of the primary eligible groups. (Pending)
 - HR 4576 - FY 2001 Department of Defense Appropriations Act**, has been designated Public Law 106-259.
 - Appropriates funds for a 3.7 percent pay increase for military personnel.
 - Provides \$100 million for a TRICARE Senior Pharmacy Program
- (under which all Medicare-eligible military retirees and eligible family members would have the same pharmacy benefits that military retirees under 65 receive through the regular TRICARE program).
- Provides \$2 million for an independent oversight panel to present recommendations to Congress by December 31, 2002, regarding the components of a permanent military health care program for the Medicare-eligible.
 - Allocates \$28 million for research into Gulf War illnesses.
 - Appropriates \$292 million for university research initiatives.
 - Provides \$2 million for the National D-Day museum.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE

- S 71** - To establish a presumption of service-connection for certain veterans with Hepatitis C, and for other purposes. (Pending)
- S 72** - To restore the eligibility of veterans for benefits resulting from injury or disease attributable to the use of tobacco products during a period of military service, and for other purposes. (Pending)
- Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act.**
 - Interim guidelines have been developed by the VA as a preliminary step to drafting regulations on provisions such as making changes in long-term care delivery, revising veterans’ copayments, and authorizing emergency care reimbursement for non-VA care for certain veterans.
- VA Waiting Times**
 - Congress has requested the GAO to conduct a review of veteran’s waiting times for outpatient health care to determine locations and clinics that have had success in reducing them. Specifically, they are to:
 - Determine, where possible, foot causes of waiting time problems and barriers to widespread implementation of “best practices” in improving them
 - Include an analysis of the channels available to communicate these practices within the healthcare system and effect use of these channels
 - Determine VA’s progress in improving the accuracy of the national waiting time database

- Agent Orange - Diabetes Link**
 - The Air Force’s Ranch Hand Study has found particularly strong evidence to support an association between dioxin exposure and diabetes.
 - The Institute of Medicine expects to complete the expedited review by the end of September, and if it acknowledges diabetes as a condition associated with exposure to Agent Orange, the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs would have 60 days to determine whether a presumption of service connection is warranted.

❖ Veterans Home Highlights

Independence Day celebration features games galore

By Marianne Hempel, WVH volunteer

The Washington Veterans Home celebrated Independence Day with a combination of events including great food, lively entertainment and games galore.

The Fourth of July FUN FEST, an annual community event, was kicked off by the Fathoms O’ Fun committee with a pancake breakfast to raise funds. For the first, time Building 9 attended in force with 20 residents attending. They eagerly enjoyed the delicious pancakes with strawberries on top.

The entire day was packed with a variety of entertainment for each family member and resident to enjoy. Featured this year were: The Clam Island Band; Port Orchard Line Dancers; Dick Coolan’s Musical Trio; and The Samaria Dancers--always a favorite of the residents!

Children participated in many activities scheduled just for them. There is no telling who enjoyed the children’s parade the most, the participants or the many residents watching and appreciating the children’s endless supply of energy. There were field games to be won, songs with finger-plays, carnival games and balloon animals.

Bingo, a passion of many residents, was available for most of the day. Everyone was a winner in some way by participating in the games.

Many of the service organizations that work throughout the year providing support for the veterans, also participated in the Fun Fest by sponsoring booths and events. The samples provided in the food booths were simply delicious.

The day closed with the annual pie eating contest. New and returning champions were crowned for the various age groups, while many just watched and had a piece of pie of their own.

Our special thanks go out to all of the volunteers who assisted the residents to various events, and to the Resident Counsel for giving each resident ten dollars to enjoy the day. Fun Fest 2000 was a success for all who attended.



Children of all ages enjoy the entertainment and funny balloon clown.



Residents Bill and Laura Walls sell their handmade jewelry at the Retsil Fun Fest.

Street Talk... with residents at the WA Veterans Home

What is your most vivid memory of the Korean War?



“I can still see the Chinese invading our camp like a bunch of black ants screaming as they ran down the hills at night.”

Fay Magruder,
Army Engineers
Veteran



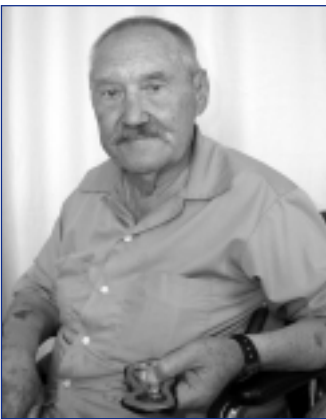
“I was on the Brinkley Bass Destroyer when they were signing the peace treaty. When the USS Wisconsin came up beside us, I knew they meant business...sign the treaty or else.”

Robert E. Allen,
Navy Veteran



“I was stationed at Fecom AFB, my girl-friend and I went to Tokyo, and took a ride in a rickshaw to the Pearl King Ricky Moto’s to buy a ring.”

Mary Clifford,
Air Force Veteran



“Losing my buddies.”

Ruben Hawes,
Army Infantry Veteran



“The number of men I had to shoot. I was a sniper in Dog Company 5th Marines, stationed North of the Chosin Reservoir.”

Stephen Armstrong,
Marine Corps Veteran

Resident Profile

Forward Ho!

By Bob Campbell, WSH volunteer

For most of us, the legendary Horse Soldiers are part of another century. As a United States Cavalry trooper, 100 year-old Abe Caylor, the Soldiers Home's newest resident, was a part of that legend.

Caylor, a native of Clarksville, Indiana, liked horses as a youth and hoped to someday join the Army Cavalry unit. That opportunity came with the outbreak of World War I. He was 18 years old when he enlisted in the spring of 1918 and was assigned to Troop D, 12th U.S. Cavalry. After training at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and Jackson Barracks, Louisiana, he sailed to his duty station, Camp Cortezal in the Panama Canal Zone.

"The primary purpose of the Cavalry was to provide security for American interests in the Canal Zone," said Caylor. "Mounted cavalymen were well-armed and presented a formidable picture for anyone contesting them. We carried a saber in the scabbard secured to the left side of the saddle, a .30 caliber rifle in a sheath on the right side and a holstered .45 caliber semi-automatic handgun."

Caylor talked about how the cavalry horses were named. All of the horses in Troop A had names beginning with the letter A. Troop B horses had names beginning with the letter B, etc. Officially, Caylor's Troop D mount was named Dusty, but unofficially, Caylor had other names for him. "That horse was the meanest animal that ever stood on four hooves," he said. "Every morning when I went to the corral to bridle and saddle him, it was a battle. He fought me every inch of the way! Once I got the bridle and saddle on him and led him out of the corral, he was one of the most gentle and dependable mounts in the troop." Caylor emphasized that the needs and cares of the horses always came first before those of the trooper.



Abe Caylor

❖ Soldiers Home Highlights

Private Caylor earned \$30 per month, but there was a deduction of \$6.40 for insurance and other incidental deductions, which lowered the total take-home to less than \$19. "But you could manage if you were careful. Troopers who smoked bought name-brand cigarettes for 10 cents per pack, or they could buy the off-brands for only 5 cents per pack," he said.

Caylor received his Army discharge in 1920 and spent the next six months recovering from a tropical illness which left him unable to do much of anything except sleep. After that, he engaged in several fields of employment, most having to do with "driving anything that could be driven" including trucks, buses and ambulances. However, the most rewarding employment he had was building bombers for the Boeing Company. He helped assemble aircraft from 1944 to 1968, at which time he retired. Caylor engaged in a few odd jobs, but essentially remained retired and traveled extensively throughout the U.S., including Alaska. He also toured Canada and Mexico. Caylor tried to make arrangements to return to Panama for a visit via tramp steamer, but when the officials found out he was 80 years old, they wouldn't let him aboard. "What a disappointment!" Caylor said.

When asked how he has managed to stay so young he said, "I have always just minded my own business!" Chuckling, he continued, "I have just concentrated on that and not wasted my time minding other people's business."

Caylor moved into the Soldiers Home this August. He enjoys taking strolls around the campus and finds reading western novels a source of entertainment. "The staff are very helpful and cooperative. This is a real nice place to live," he added.

Abe Caylor will celebrate his 101st birthday with his new friends at Orting on Oct. 7.



Annual Resident-Family Picnic

At this years annual family picnic, it appears the petting zoo activity was the most popular event. Attendees also enjoyed the accordion player as they ate a traditional picnic lunch of hotdogs, hamburgers, baked beans and potato salad prepared by the food service department.



Where Are The Daughters of WWII Veterans?

By Tom Schumacher, PTSD program manager

For several years, the PTSD Program has maintained an interest in the impact of combat trauma upon family members. Most of you are familiar with this topic as one of the more powerful forces - the role of father's World War Two experience - which shaped the psyche of Vietnam Veterans. The heroism surrounding the defeat of the enemy during WWII created a *craving* among many Vietnam Veterans to share their fathers' adventures. These same fathers were very stoic about their war trauma experiences, and if they talked at all, shared experiences that only added to the son's desire to share in this version of heroic manhood.

Recently, thanks to the twisted Kaffaesque demands of "well grounded claims," providers are frequently being lead into the role of establishing a diagnosis that would enable a veteran to file a service-connected claim for their war experiences. The VA is no longer allowed, as in the past, to assist in the development of these claims.

One recent evaluation (this is actually a composite of several evaluations) was of a 79-year-old man who is living alone in a home for elderly. This gentleman has essentially lost his family as a result of untreated PTSD. His war trauma as a marine occurred in the retaking of Pacific Islands. Errors in reading known tide tables on the part of the Navy, created a very disastrous landing situation. Most of the first wave of marines died. The horrors that were to follow robbed this veteran of his capacity to function fully most of his life. Nevertheless, he worked all of his life, and was only ill a handful of days. Interpersonally, he was difficult to be around, although very responsible and faithful to his family.

This veteran has two daughters, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He expresses the fact that he is very proud of his family. When I asked him how often they came to visit, "I was not a very good father," was his reply. "I was a strict man, and if the damn government had just helped me when I came back from the war, I would have my family today."

The veteran's wife of 50 years had died five years ago and he was unable to care for himself very effectively. As a result, the

veteran remarried quickly. It was apparent that this veteran's daughters had elected to remain in the background since their father remarried.

Within a few days of the evaluation, it was determined prudent to contact these daughters for information to support the claim, and to render case management services for a longer term solution to their father's living situation. He seemed ideal for placement in the Veterans Home at Retsil.

Both daughters reported a childhood experience with their father as one marked by confusion, fear, worry and the feeling that they were responsible for his conduct. Their father was unpredictable and behaved very oddly at times during their childhood. "It was never understandable. No one had ever considered that the war might have had this kind of impact upon him."

But upon hearing accounts of their father's behavior, the experienced war trauma evaluator would immediately understand the likely source of many of his behaviors. Checking parameters around the house, getting up at odd hours, startle responses that were extreme, keeping a large collection of weapons, violent nightmares and screams in the middle of the night, were common for this veteran.

Interpersonally, their father was withdrawn, lacked joy or spontaneity. "He was stern and perfectionist about everything, and life was serious in all respects. The least little thing could have major reactive consequences, and spankings were just on the verge of being beatings. Parent to child discussions were very much like police interrogations."

Children growing up in this family were bound to develop troubled interpersonal and intimate partner selection skills. This was evident in the failed relationships of these daughters. Their lives were, while not empty, without companionships. Their mother's death marked the loss of the link between their father and themselves. Now, they had to deal with all of their memories and feelings about their father as they attempted to help with his current medical and personal needs.

Predictably, avoidance is a common *best method* of coping with the ambivalence these daughters feel for their father. And this comes at a time when the parent is in greatest need for resolution. Seeing this aging parent spending his last days alone compels us all to seek solutions.

An Issue Too Important To Avoid

I hope to see others write about some of their experiences around WWII veterans and the resulting family dynamics. The advancing age of this veteran population is creating an urgency for families seeking closure to long-standing problems. Many children of veterans appear to be totally unaware of the source of their problems with these parents. Several hundred WWII veterans are dying in Washington State every month. Many suffer from PTSD, depression and dementia. It is not surprising that the dementia symptoms reported have a very clear combat theme to them.

In recent evaluations, we have found "sundowners syndrome" is one such manifestation which can be flavored by war duty. *Sundowners* is a dementia that has its most evident appearance as night falls. It

can manifest itself by the belief that people are crawling toward the house, or hiding in the tree line near the house. It may include suspicious beliefs that the enemy is in the house, or that one's spouse must be interrogated to learn where the enemy is hiding. Anger and fear are common.

A thorough history may reveal these symptoms match war experiences of the veteran, although sometimes in symbolic form.

What We Can Do!

We all know the power of education. In our program's outcome studies we have found that clients were most appreciative of the psycho-education they received about PTSD/war trauma. Many of the clients we first encounter have never obtained the basic information about trauma and its effect upon their own behavior. It is my opinion there remains a much larger group of people who need help immediately to know about their

father's or mother's war experiences, and the problems these experiences have helped create. Time is running out for many veterans who can still salvage some peaceful closure with children and spouses as their lives draw to a close.

The daughters in the above collective example, and in general, have a special burden. As traditional caregivers in their families, they are often the ones who must be reached first to rebuild the bridge to their parent. I am interested in creating some method of informing the citizens of Washington of this war experience related dynamic, and to promote a means of helping them work through these issues while there is still time.

Author's Note: I wish to acknowledge the contributions of Bridget Cantrell, Ph.D. and Lena Swanson, WDVA Benefits Specialists, for their contributions in writing this article.

HEPATITIS C... A Major Concern for Veterans

Are You at Risk for HEPATITIS C?

- Have you been exposed to someone else's blood through contact with a bleeding wound, through needlestick injury or in any other way?
- Have you had a blood transfusion or organ transplant?
- Were you treated for clotting problems with a blood product made before 1987?
- Have you ever, EVEN ONCE, used a needle to inject drugs like heroin or cocaine?
- Have you ever, EVEN ONCE, used cocaine intranasally (snorted it through a straw or bill)?
- Have you ever had sex with someone who had HCV or had multiple sex partners?
- Have you ever had a tattoo or part of your body pierced?
- Have you ever had acupuncture with non-disposable needles?
- Have you ever had kidney dialysis?
- Have you ever shared a razor or

toothbrush with someone who may have been infected with Hepatitis C?

- Have you ever had an unexplained abnormal liver function test?
- Do you suffer from unexplained liver disease?
- Have you ever worked in a health care occupation?
- Have you ever been exposed to Hepatitis A or Hepatitis B and received a serum gamma globulin immunization?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you should consider getting a HCV blood test. It is the only way to determine if you have been infected with HCV and it is a blood test not routinely given with physical exams.

Additionally, the Veterans Health Administration recommends testing if you are a Vietnam-era veteran or you wish to be tested.

Why is it important to be tested for HEPATITIS C?

If you test positive for Hepatitis C, you may have chronic liver disease. You need to

see a doctor to:

- Find out if you have liver disease and if you should be treated;
- Learn how you can protect your liver from further harm; and
- Learn how you can prevent spreading HCV to others.

To be tested for HEPATITIS C

Veterans can contact their local county veterans service officer or request an HCV test through the VA Medical Center.

Resources

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) 1-888-4-HEPCDC
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis>

The American Liver Foundation
1-888-4HEP USA or 1-800-GO LIVER
<http://www.liverfoundation.org>

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
hepatitis web site
<http://www.va.gov/hepatitisc>

PUYALLUP FAIR SALUTES WASHINGTON VETERANS

★ SEPTEMBER 20 ★



MISS AMERICA 2000, HEATHER FRENCH hosts a tribute concert featuring CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVISITED

★ Veterans receive discounted fair admission \$4.50 ★ Free hepatitis C testing all day at VATA HEP Mobile ★ Free infield concert admission to first 50 vets screened ★

Meet Miss America 2000, Heather French
at the VATA HEP Mobile, 4-6 PM
★ Gold Gate Entrance Fountain ★



DID YOU KNOW?

Governor Gary Locke recently announced a plan to help seniors purchase prescription drugs at lower costs. As a portion of this plan mandates state agencies to combine their purchasing power to obtain lower prescription drug prices, this proposal has the potential to benefit a large portion of our senior veteran population and their families.

WDVA has also undertaken a program to reduce prescription drug prices – specifically for residents at the Homes. The department contracted with the Federal VA to purchase drugs at reduced costs and use generic brands. It also provides for bulk delivery of medications, thus eliminating the prior need to repackage medications. An added benefit is prescriptions, records, billing and ordering are available electronically thus reducing waiting time, margins of error and staff time.

The department will continue to pursue additional remedies to maximize cost savings for veterans and their families.



Announcing the creation of the Korean War Children's Memorial

Commemorating the Humanitarian Aid the United States Armed Forces Rendered the Children of Korea from 1950 to 1953.

On August 11, 2001 a unique Korean War memorial will be dedicated in a small park in Bellingham, Washington. The memorial, in the form of a traditional tiled Korean temple roof atop four poles, will honor the humanitarian aid the American service men and women rendered the children of Korea during the time of conflict and for years thereafter.

The roof will symbolize the shelter that was given to the lost, wandering, homeless, hungry and ill children-victims of the war who were taken in and cared for by American armed forces personnel. The children were fed, bathed, hugged, housed and supported by the servicemen who wrote for help from their families and friends back home in America.

Korean War veterans all over the country have an opportunity to be a part of this project in some small way, whether through submitting photos or just sharing their stories.

Explore www.koreanchildren.org. web pages and feel the love our American servicemen and women gave the children of Korea. Visit the various pages to see how you can be a part of this project.

Olympia Veteran's Day Parade

The Military Order of the World Wars, Tacoma Chapter, is organizing the first Annual Olympia Veteran's Day Parade and ceremony scheduled for Saturday, November 11, at 9:00 a.m. Special honors for all those who served during the Korean War, which began 50 years ago this year, will be highlighted as the parade concludes.

The Parade route is three quarters of a mile long and should take approximately 45 minutes to walk. The route will end at the Korean War Memorial where a short ceremony will take place. Veteran, fraternal, civic, youth and other patriotic organizations are invited to march. Bands are also invited to participate.

Contact Ernie Elmore, 360.943.7366 for an application to participate. Completed applications must be submitted by November 5.

Gober is VA’s Acting Secretary

WASHINGTON — Hershel W. Gober has taken over as Acting Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the federal government’s second largest cabinet agency. Former VA Secretary, Togo West, announced his departure on July 10.

With an annual budget of \$48 billion, VA employs about 219,000 people at hundreds of VA medical centers, clinics, benefits offices and national cemeteries throughout the country.

“I am eager to continue building on this administration’s extraordinary accomplishments,” said Gober, who has served as VA’s Deputy Secretary since February 1993.

During his tenure with VA, Gober has been instrumental in helping secure expanded benefits for veterans who were prisoners of war, or who were exposed to Agent Orange, radiation or mustard gas, and for Gulf War veterans suffering from unexplained illnesses. He has provided day-to-day leadership as the department transformed its health care system into patient-centered networks emphasizing access and primary and ambulatory care.

Gober is the architect of “One VA,” a sweeping program of employee empowerment aimed at breaking down organizational and procedural barriers and forming a unified, seamless agency focused on one thing — the veteran.

He led the reform of VA’s equal employment opportunity complaint process with creation of an independent Office of Resolution Management.

As a member of the President’s Management Council, Gober reviews successful management methodologies used in private industry and oversees transplantation of these “best practices” into VA. He developed an awards program to recognize improvements, giving his “Scissors” award to innovators who have cut red tape and improved services to veterans and their families.

Gober first won the confidence of then-Governor Bill Clinton in directing veterans affairs for the State of Arkansas, and his nomination as VA’s Deputy Secretary was one of President Clinton’s first appointments. In addition to the regular duties he has performed in that position, Gober led Presidential missions to Vietnam seeking resolution of POW and MIA issues.

Gober’s military service covers 20 years and includes tours of duty in both the Marine Corps and the Army. He served two tours in Vietnam and received numerous decorations, including the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and the Soldier’s Medal.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

House OKs Veterans Benefits Measure

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs must improve its efforts to help veterans file benefits claims under a bill passed in the House.

The measure, which passed 414-0, is aimed at reversing a recent court decision that overturned the agency’s responsibility to assist veterans.

Under a July 1999 U.S. Court of Appeals ruling, the VA is prohibited from assisting veterans with claims for benefits until after the veterans establish that their claims are “well-grounded.”

For years, the agency considered it had a “duty” to help veterans establish well-grounded claims. The measure passed by the House simply puts what had been considered a long-standing responsibility of the agency into law.

Such assistance from the agency would consist of helping veterans request information from military records or informing the veteran of the information and evidence needed to fully develop the claim.

“This is an effort to make the VA more user friendly, more constituent friendly,” said Rep. Jack Quinn, R-N.Y.

The bill also allows all veterans whose claims were denied since the court decision to request that the VA review their cases.

In another measure, the House passed, by voice, a bill that enhances veterans benefits, including the authorization of cost of living increases on disability compensation for veterans.

The bills, H.R. 4864 and H.R. 4850, can be found at <http://thomas.loc.gov>

VA counseling services available

U.S. veterans who served in the former Republic of Yugoslavia are now eligible for readjustment counseling services at Vet Centers, a nationwide network of community-based counseling centers operated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Vet Center eligibility has been extended to veterans who participated in one or more of three successive operations in the former Yugoslavia: Operations Joint Endeavor, Joint Guard and Joint Forge.

Eligibility includes service members who served aboard U.S. Naval vessels operating in the Adriatic Sea, or air spaces above.

Vet Centers provide readjustment counseling to combat veterans and sexual trauma survivors through a network of 206 centers in the U.S., Guam, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Vietnam War veterans were first to receive Vet Center readjustment counseling. Legislation passed in 1991 extended eligibility to all post-Vietnam combat veterans from the Gulf War and hostilities in Lebanon, Grenada, Panama and Somalia.

In 1996, another law extended Vet Center service to combat veterans who served in the military during any war or period when armed hostilities occurred, including the Korean War and World War II.

U.S. Department of Defense data indicates up to 176,000 veterans could be eligible for Vet Center services after duty in the former Yugoslavia.

Department of Veterans Affairs News Release

Women Veterans Health Programs

A number of women veterans experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military. While some have sought counseling and treatment, many have never discussed it with anyone. Sometimes women are very uncomfortable talking about it now, and even wonder if they can, or if it would matter. Yet, these women, know that they have “not felt the same” since it occurred.

Unfortunately, this is a very common reaction to sexual trauma. Many events are never reported. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care professionals are sensitive to the experience of sexual trauma and the impact it can have on a person’s physical and emotional health. They understand and are experienced VA health professionals who can help women regain their confidence, self-esteem and quality of life.

Facts you should know:

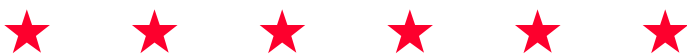
- ◆ A women veteran seeking counseling for sexual trauma may contact the VA national toll free information and assistance number, 1-800-827-1000, for up-to-date information about sexual trauma programs that may be available both from the VA and local communities.
- ◆ There is no requirement that a woman veteran must have reported the sexual trauma when it occurred or at any time during her active military service to be eligible for counseling services.
- ◆ The VA may pay compensation to a woman veteran for disabilities incurred in or aggravated by military service, including disabilities or injuries resulting from sexual trauma.
- ◆ Payment of compensation is based on the severity of the service-connected disability or disabilities. VA must first determine if there are current disabilities related to military service. SOURCE: Women Veterans Newsletter - New Orleans, LA, VA Medical Center



PUBLICATIONS SURVEY

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Communications Department is seeking thoughts and ideas from the readership of *Veteran Voices*. We want to collect information which will assist us in making good decisions about newsletter content and format for this publication, as well as future publications. We want to be sure to give you the information you need to have the greatest awareness and access to services provided by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs.

We ask that you please answer the following questions and although your name is not necessary, it would be appreciated, giving us more complete data.



Reader Category

1. Are you a;
- ☐ WDVA Staff Member
 - ☐ Home Resident
 - ☐ Community Veteran/Spouse
 - ☐ State Employee – list agency _____
 - ☐ Federal Employee – list agency _____
 - ☐ Other (please identify) _____

Name (optional) _____

Newsletter Content

2. What type of articles/information do you like best about *Veteran Voices*?
- _____
- _____
- _____
3. What improvements would you make to articles/information in *Veteran Voices*?
- _____
- _____
- _____
4. What specific information would you like to see included or covered more extensively?
- _____
- _____
- _____

5. Do you find the articles informative?
- ☐ Not informative ☐ Somewhat informative ☐ Very informative
- _____
- _____

Newsletter Format

6. Do you think the three divisions (Soldiers Home, Veterans Home, Central Office/Vet Services) should have separate newsletters?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
- _____
7. Are the articles easy to follow from page to page?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
- _____
- _____

8. Is the type size easy enough to read? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Thank you taking the time to fill out our survey. If you have any questions, contact Miriam Young at (360) 725-2169.

Please mail your completed survey to:

WDVA Publications Editor
PO Box 41150
Olympia, WA 98504

Or campus mail - MS: 41150 Olympia

Email messages are also welcome, miriam@dva.wa.gov.



Veteran Voices

Veteran Voices is published for veteran advocates like Jo Peterson, who works as a Veterans Benefits Specialist in the Veterans Estate Management Program. She worked in the Spokane field office for 24 years prior to moving to the Central Office in 1995. Jo will be retiring from state service October 31, 2000.



Washington State
Dept. of Veterans Affairs
P.O. Box 41150
1011 Plum St 2nd Floor
Olympia, WA 98504-1150

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington State
Department of Printing